

The Desert

TO THE TRUE AMERICAN.

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VOL. I.

THE INGENUOUS CONFESSION;

A TALE.

IN the fertile province of Estremadura, in Spain, about two centuries ago, lived a gentleman of the name of don Henriquez de Castro. He was of an ancient family allied to several of the grandees of the kingdom, and though, in reality, of a generous and benevolent disposition, possessed that kind of haughtiness and jealousy of his honour, which has at all times distinguished the gentry and nobility of that country. His possessions were large, and his power and privileges submitted to as irresistible by the neighbouring peasantry. His will was their law; and to contradiction he was a stranger.

The estate bordering on his own was the domain of another lord, named don Hernando Vieyra, of nearly the same character—high-spirited, easily irascible, and violent, on every occasion which seemed to affect his honour—yet not destitute of that generosity which readily accepted the slightest concession as a ground for reconciliation.

Don Henriquez had a son named Pedro, and a daughter named Elvira. The son was in character the counterpart of his father, except that he was more haughty and irascible, and somewhat vindictive; faults which seemed every day to grow upon him, notwithstanding the example of mildness and gentleness he continually had before his eyes in the person of his sister, who was a pattern of female delicacy, tenderness, and goodness.

Don Hernando had likewise a son, whose character considerably resembled that of his father; yet though he entertained all the high ideas of honour natural to a Spanish gentleman, they were tempered by a cultivated understanding, and a disposition truly benevolent. He was equally slow to take offence, and prompt to accede to a reconciliation. Such were his endowments and his manners, that he was at once admired and treated with deference by those who considered themselves as entitled to rank higher in the scale of society, and loved and adored by all his inferiors.

These neighbouring families had long preserved the most friendly intercourse. The younger branches especially were almost continually together; and it seemed scarcely possible to render the union closer, when an idle dispute on the antiquity of their pedigrees, which casually arose in conversation, put an end to their friendship, and sowed in the breasts of don Henriquez and don Hernando the seeds of an animosity which every day grew into a more violent and apparently irreconcilable hatred.

But don Manuel, the son of don Hernando, was not eager to take part in the quarrel,

though the offence, if offence it might be called, had been given by don Henriquez, and he considered his father as only vindicating his own honour. He had been too attentive to the charms of Elvira to wish this disunion of the families, which must separate him for ever from her. He endeavoured, therefore, but in vain, to soothe the violence of both parties, and induce them to listen to reason. He addressed himself to don Pedro, who had been his almost inseparable companion; but he received him with haughtiness, and even appeared to insinuate contempt, which his generous nature was incapable of bearing; and they parted more violent enemies even than their fathers.

Still, however, don Manuel could not consent to renounce Elvira.—His good sense told him that her gentle nature was not chargeable with the pride or prejudices of her family; and he still contrived to continue his visits to her secretly.—As these meetings could not be very frequent, the few opportunities he had of seeing her, served only to enhance his passion; and when they arrived, ardent indeed were his professions of admiration of her charms, and love of her virtues; and repeated were his vows of eternal fidelity. They lamented together the unhappy dissensions of their families, which threw them at such a distance, and enfeebled, nay, almost annihilated, their hopes of union; and when they separated, felt the utmost anxiety lest some accident should discover their interview, and a repetition of it be prevented by the vindictive haughtiness of their parents.

It chanced that, after one of these meetings, the brother of donna Elvira discovered don Manuel as he was going away. He took no notice of him, though his pride was greatly offended; for he surmised that personal altercation might bring on a challenge; and real courage was not the predominant ingredient in the character of don Pedro. He therefore let him pass, but immediately repaired to the apartment of his sister, whom he reproached in the most violent terms, for disgracing her family by holding conversation with, or enduring the sight of, the son of the man who had insulted it. So much did he yield to his folly, pride, and passion, that he drew his sword, and swore he would immediately be the destruction both of her and of himself, unless she would instantly swear the oath he should dictate, never more to see don Manuel, but everlastingly to hate him.

The terrified Elvira expostulated to little purpose with her raving brother, and, at last, his rage dreadfully increasing, found no other alternative but to swear as he directed,—that she would see don Manuel no more; obtaining, with great difficulty, the single alleviation—until recompense be made for the insult offered, and the families reconciled. She likewise gave an extorted assent to the latter part of the oath

proposed,—that she would join her father and her brother in their hatred of don Hernando and his son till a reconciliation should take place.

To the former part of this oath, so cruelly imposed, Elvira most scrupulously adhered; to the latter it was not in her power to adhere.—She absolutely refused to admit don Manuel any more to her presence. She wrote to him, indeed; but it was to assure him that their union was become impossible; and, in her letter, mindful of her extorted oath, she carefully refrained from every expression that could be interpreted into affection, or even esteem. The coldness of despair prevailed through the whole, which chilled the heart and almost distracted the brain of her lover. But vain were all his attempts to gain access to her; and he was compelled to wait with patience some fortunate but little to be expected accident, which might remove the seemingly insuperable difficulties that surrounded him, and again restore to him her whom he loved above all things in the world.

In the mean time, the health of Elvira visibly declined. The roses fled her blooming cheeks, and melancholy perpetually overshadowed her countenance. She, whose innocent gaiety had diffused life wherever she came, appeared constantly sunk in a joyless gloom which nothing could dissipate. Her hours were devoted to sadness; and, when alone, her tears almost incessantly flowed.

These indications of anxiety and grief, it will be supposed, were strong symptoms of her love for don Manuel. But her melancholy originated likewise from another cause.—The good and gentle Elvira was religious with a zeal bordering on superstition. Surprised into an absurd oath by the terror inspired by the rage of her brother, she found herself so far from being able to adhere to the latter part of it by which she had vowed to hate don Manuel, that, now she was entirely separated from him, she was convinced that what she had conceived to be only esteem was really love, and startled at the discovery. Her credulous fancy sometimes suggested to her that the arch enemy of mankind exerted his usual art in turning the tide of her thoughts on don Manuel, and increasing her affection for him, that she might more grossly violate the oath her brother had extorted from her, and thus more certainly become his prey.

After long sustaining the conflict of these ideas, she resolved to unburthen her conscience, at the confessional, to father Ribiera, a Benedictine, who had long been the spiritual guide of her family. This good father was not of that class of priests who foster superstition that it may produce them gain, and know no other religion but that which tends to disseminate di-

vision and enmity. He was anxious to promote unity, and extend the practice of benevolence. He was the father and comforter of his penitents, the friend of the poor, and could not bring himself to hate even a heretic.

To this worthy friar did Elvira apply for spiritual direction and absolution. She related to him the history of the deadly feud which had taken place between the two families, her esteem for don Manuel, and the fearful oath extorted from her by her brother, to hate him; ingenuously confessing that it was now impossible for her not to pass every moment of her life in actual and mortal sin; since she found it absolutely out of her power to avoid loving him, or to prevent that love from continually increasing. She was so overcome at the conclusion of this confession that she nearly fainted, and with difficulty staggered to a seat, on which she was supported from sinking to the ground, by the arm of the benevolent confessor.

When she had a little recovered, she told the good father what, as has before been said, her fancy had suggested to her, relative to her increasing affection for don Manuel,—that it was the work of the evil spirit, to ensnare her soul.

“ Daughter (said the benevolent friar) yield not to such ideas. The evil spirit prompts not to love and benevolence. Rather believe it proceeds from some beneficent being, who thus warns you of your duty, to employ all your influence with your father and your brother to heal this deadly breach, and thus absolve yourself from a vow which has been so unnaturally forced upon you. But go, my child, leave the rest to me. I will use my utmost endeavours (and I trust they will prove successful) to restore friendship between your two families, and peace and happiness to your agitated mind. Rely only on my discretion, and permit me to make that use of the secret you have now disclosed to me, that I shall judge proper.”

Elvira consented, and father Rabiera, the next day, repaired to don Henriquez, over whom he had considerable influence, and frankly told him that a most heinous sin had been committed by his son, for which he must expect the divine vengeance to pursue his whole family, till he should ward it off by being reconciled to the man he falsely imagined his enemy. “ Don Hernando, added he, is well known to me. I am persuaded that he is incapable of the baseness of wilfully insulting a gentleman who is his friend. I am convinced that there must be some mistake in this whole affair; and when you examine into it, you will sincerely repent your haste and rashness. Remember, likewise, that your daughter is pining away in grief and wretchedness, from a vow which she can never fulfil, and of the breach of which he who forced it upon her, and you (should you, by cherishing your groundless resentment, refuse to relieve her from it) are most guilty. Should you continue obstinate (added he) I shall find it difficult to grant you absolution for such a wilful perseverance in error.”

Don Henriquez listened, and was moved. He was himself likewise subject to the terrors of superstition, and feared to offend his spiritual father. He besides felt a sincere affection for his daughter, and wished to restore her gentle bosom to peace. He therefore declared him-

self ready, could don Hernando be prevailed on to listen to any reasonable accommodation, to bury their differences in oblivion, and to revive their former friendship.

From him the good father proceeded to don Hernando; and entreated, nay (availing himself of the reverence due to his years and sacred character) commanded him to be reconciled to his neighbour, he represented to him that don Henriquez no longer harboured the smallest animosity against him, and that he had spoken of him in terms of the highest esteem and respect, and wished for an immediate interview.—To this don Hernando, after a little hesitation, consented; and the good father, who was present at their meeting, knew so well how to soothe and manage them, that he extinguished every remaining spark of enmity between them, and restored the friendship which had been so long interrupted.

The son of Henriquez he addressed with severe solemnity on the misery he had inflicted on his sister by the phrensy of his ungoverned passion; and so wrought on him that he brought him to confess and lament his error, and atone for it by an unfeigned reconciliation with don Manuel, and entreating the pardon of his sister.

The nuptials between don Manuel and Elvira were soon after celebrated, and their happiness cemented firmly the union between the families.

Thus did the benevolent father Ribiera extract good from prejudices either superstitious or bordering upon superstition; and direct them so as to produce peace and good will among mankind.

CONSCIENCE.

“ Methought the billows spoke, and told me of it,
“ The winds did sing it me, and the thunder,
“ That deep and dreadful organ-pipe, pronounced
“ The name of prosper.”

TEMPEST.

The loss of fortune, dignity, glory, and all the pageantry of earthly grandeur, is comparatively trifling when put in competition to that of virtue; when the human mind first stoops to debasement, and wanders in the paths of impiety, its progress to misery, although gradual, is too fatally inevitable, the smallest crimes by becoming habitual increase in time to the crimson tints of atrocity; then O conscience! thou most incessant and excruciating torturer, thou never failing monitor, 'tis then thine admonitions wound with remorse the breast of conscious vice; thou establishest thine awful tribunal on the ruins of neglected virtue, there to inflict a punishment far more severe than aught invented by the ingenuity of man.

When lulled in apparent security, and reveling in the round of transitory pleasure, thine awful presence intrudes itself upon the harassed imagination, and bids the lofty sinner reflect on the acts of injustice of which he has been guilty. The veil of oblivion, which with all the precaution of vice, he has endeavoured to cast over his crimes, thou canst in one unguarded moment cause himself to remove; his deeds of darkness, so cautiously enveloped with

the specious garb of dissimulation and hypocrisy, are frequently by thee laid open to the scrutinizing eye of justice. His most secret recesses thou canst penetrate, his every joy embitter, and render him who was once hardened in iniquity, susceptible to the slightest emotions of fear. The man who once was callous to the tender plaints of misery and injured innocence, will, when under thy influence, start at a shadow, tremble at an “ unreal mockery,” and imagine the most trivial sound, a solemn summons of retribution.—Such, O conscience! is the form in which thou visitest the child of iniquity; such the shape in which thou approachest the votary of vice; how happy then the man, who void of guile, dreads not thy reproaches: who, supported by the consciousness of unspotted innocence, enjoys uninterrupted serenity and peace of mind; whose slumbers are undisturbed by the phantoms of a disordered imagination, and who looks forward with the ardour of hope and expectation to the time when the virtues and vices of mankind shall receive their just reward.

PHILANDER;

OR THE DEATH-BED OF A DEIST.

A FRAGMENT.

—I knew Philander, when he was in his prime—he was an amiable youth; but he loved gaming—whole evenings were spent at the card table, and he ran through the most of his fortune. I invited him, one Sunday to accompany me to church, he obligingly consented. The text was in Ecclesiastes, “ *All is vanity.*” He listened with attention to the words that flowed from the mouth of the reverend orator, and they much affected him; the result was, from that moment he quitted his evil practices, and made religion his only study. He continued in this way until a book made its appearance, entitled “ *The Age of Reason,*” written by a man whose name was once held dear. The novelty of the circumstance, induced Philander to purchase it. He read it. It had been a practice with him to call upon me before he went to church on a Sunday, and the next Sabbath I was not a little surprized, by the appearance of his servant, who told me his master could not go to church that day. “ It is impossible,” said I, “ and sent a person immediately, to inform him that I was waiting for him.” The person returned shortly after, with word that Philander was much indisposed. Determined to know the truth I waited on him. I found him with a book in his hand; as soon as he perceived me, he threw it by. “ What is the reason,” said I, “ that you will not go with me “ to the house of God, I am afraid that the “ book which I saw you reading just now, has “ drawn off your affections from the “ *one thing* “ *needful* “ It is a book” he replied, “ which “ does honour to the writer; and reason has “ taught me, that what I did before was not “ right.”

I departed, fully resolved, that no publication whatever should turn me from my duty;

had did not see Philander, until some time after, and then I was called to witness his death. He was very weak and said, he had sent for me to intercede with Heaven for mercy for him. "What," said I "has reason deserted you—you informed me that you were now in the right way? "Ah" said he, "I am deceived—the reason I possessed then, was (as I have since found) only a wish that it might be so." I joined in prayer with him, but he had no hope; Heaven seemed deaf to his entreaties, and he died with all the horrors of a guilty conscience, OWEN.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF WOMEN.

THAT the influence of the fair sex gives a bias to the moral conduct of our sex, is an axiom that has stood the test of ages. Women, conscious of their natural imbecility to govern men by dint of force, soon found out a more gentle way of subduing them. By captivating their minds and securing their hearts, they gained that ascendancy over them, which has been attended with the happiest consequences, and which never can be lost but in an age of the greatest depravity. As long as beauty can charm, or virtue endear, shall the influence of women last; since nothing but an universal degeneracy among men can possibly suppress it. Such a degeneracy what fatality must attend! for when the love of women is excluded the breast of man, what baneful passions will he not substitute in its place! Against such an unwished for period how justly does the sage philosopher (Rousseau) exclaim:—"Woe be to the age wherein women lose their influence, and their judgements are disregarded by men! It is the last stage of depravity. All civilized people have paid due regard to women. Reflect on Sparta, reflect on the Germans, reflect on Rome; Rome, the seat of glory and of virtue, if ever they had place on earth. It was there that the women honoured the exploits of the renowned Generals, that they publicly wept over the fathers of their country, that their vows or lamentations were held sacred as the most solemn judgements of the republic. All the grand revolutions were brought about by women: through a woman Rome obtained liberty; through a woman the plebeians acquired the consulship; a woman put an end to the tyranny of the Decemvirs; by means of women, Rome, when on the brink of destruction, was screened from the resentment of an enraged and victorious outlaw." Hence may men learn the due value of women, whose influence, when extended to the heart, inspire it with the most heroic virtue. Hence may they see the necessity of prizing those whom it is their interest to esteem. And ye, O sons of Columbia, whose generous breasts can best feel the force of love and beauty, be it your peculiar province to justify the fair daughters of virtue, and may their smiles be your sweet reward.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Lines signed J. W. N. shall appear in our next.—An interview is requested with the writer of the essay on EDUCATION.

FOR THE DESSERT.

ON EDUCATION.

"The souls dark cottage, battered and decay'd,
Lies in more light, through chinks which time has made."

WALLER.

NOTWITHSTANDING the numerous pieces which have appeared, at different times, on the very interesting and important subject of EDUCATION, yet none of the authors have a clear prospect of the objects to which it ought to be directed; as this is the case, permit an old man, to offer a few sentiments upon it, as it is of acknowledged national importance, and may be considered as the source of domestic happiness.

If, in the consideration of this weighty subject, he has taken it up on different grounds from many of his junior brethren, and pointed out some things essential in a right education not so much noticed by others, it may be owing to his having passed his grand climacteric, when the value of human nature is appreciated on different principles from what it is in the spring time of life, that had he written an essay on education at that time, it would not be any matter of surprise to have found it as different from the present, as spring is from winter; and yet had they been the production of another pen, something valuable might be found in each: The one might lead us through all the labyrinths of science, and contributed to store the mind with many valuable facts; displayed all the wonders and beauties of the creation, in so grand, so sublime, and so instructive a point of view, as not to fail to raise, in contemplative minds, the most unaffected devotion and sincere delight, and give such a prospect of the works of nature as never could be arrived at without the aid of philosophy. How many auxiliaries to the senses does it afford, and what additional strength to the feeble powers of man? and yet it will not do for all, Endymion like, to devote themselves to subjects of this kind; otherways poverty and contempt may be their allotment, and yet there are some who have such a knack of exploring and explaining the works of nature, that they become as ornaments in the galaxy of science, such was our admirable Rittenhouse. But God who knows all things, and does all things wisely, has been sparing of calling into existence beings so divinely illuminated.

There is a lower sphere for the great mass of mankind to act in where they may fill up their places in society with dignity, and with greater advantage to their families and themselves, than if ever they had a page of the volume of nature, opened before them, other than what relates to the management of their temporal concerns, the business in which they are employed; it is such as these to whom I principally write.

As this is the case, and as I am well advanced into the winter of life my prospects are altered, and those things which appeared essential in the improvement of mankind are now considered of less value than they were.—To store the mind with a proper share of literature, to enable the pupil to advance any lengths in the field of science, their inclination or genius may dispose

them for, from a rational prospect of being benefited, without leading them into the study of the more abstruse parts of science, and subjecting to the discussion of problems barren of utility and too intricate for the generality of mankind to engage in; in short, an education calculated to form only mathematicians, astronomers, philosophers, and professions of the gown, is not what I am about to recommend; it is a system calculated to promote the welfare of the citizens more at large; such a one as will not occasion the plough to stand still, nor diminish the necessary attention to domestic concerns. This will promote individual property which may prove a source, if wisely improved, of great national blessings in the ability which it will afford for improvements in various ways. From what has been advanced, some may be ready to exclaim, surely! here is some regenerated Goth risen again, inimical to science, unfriendly to human improvements and averse to the further civilization of mankind.

But I hope it will appear, that this is not the object of the author of this essay, but to clear science of its pageantry, to lessen the drudgery of study, to prevent a misapplication of time and talents, and lay the foundation, for an improvement of manners without any obstruction to a progress in the most essential parts of school instruction*, is his motives for engaging in this undertaking, as the mind may be prepared to tread the arduous ground of science without it, and when ripe explore those delightful fields to greater advantage, ease and utility, to themselves.

And here I have to lament the task which I have entered upon, may be, with too little consideration of its great importance and delicacy, in consequence of the great diversity of religious opinions which prevail in this once favoured land of Pennsylvania, where through the liberal policy of its great, and greatly illuminated founder, William Penn the Quaker, who provided so effectually against all encroachments upon liberty of conscience, that no religious establishments was to have the ascendancy, in short, to express in the language of scripture, that "Judah was not to vex Ephraim, nor Ephraim Judah." And as the sect of which he was a member, held tenets incompatible with some other sects, and are acknowledged of purer morals than is generally ascribed to others, they therefore cannot mix with advantage in schools established by them on any principle, which is the case with several other sects, that whatever plan may be proposed for the benefit of every class of citizens should be such, as each sect can unite with separately at least, though religious considerations may prevent a participation of the benefits of them together. A plan upon this contracted system which will suit all, is what I shall in a future essay offer †.

(To be continued.)

* Instead of preventing the children's advance in true science, this system is calculated to promote it. Genius is unfolded in many by slow degrees, and at a later period, than in others, as witness Dean Swift, he had the rudiments of science implanted in him, and the value set before him in early life, the future bent of his mind directed the rest.

† For these reasons one general system for schools on the New England, or any plan, I have yet seen for establishing charity schools in Pennsylvania, would violate their invaluable rights derived from William Penn.



FOR THE DESSERT.

MONODY,

To the Memory of an only Daughter, who died,

Aged 11.

BY HER FATHER.

A common theme, a flatt'ring muse may fire,
To raise our passions, when she sings for hire!
She may our wonders or our praises steal,
By feigning transports which she does not feel;
But, when the song from inbred love proceeds,
And paints the torments of a heart that bleeds,
The mourning muse exerts superior skill,
And dips in tears the woe depicting quill.
Our bosoms then with real tortures glow,
For, genuine sorrow doth from nature flow.
Ah! what is life, that anxious wish of all?
A drop of honey in a draught of gall,
An half-existence, or a waking dream,
A bitter fountain with a muddy stream,
A tale, a shadow, or an empty sound,
That's lost with sorrow, and with anguish found.
A fading landscape painted upon clay,
The source of woe, the idol of a day,
The sweet deluder of a restless mind,
Which, if 'twas lost, how few would wish to find!
Untimely thus the infant budding rose
Is cropt by some rude hand before it blows;
Away the little soul of fragrance flies,
And beauty in its bloom unheeded dies.
Tho' 'tis in vain to wish for her return,
Yet, all the ties of nature bid me mourn.
Can I be dumb when bleeding nature cries,
That I have lost the darling of my eyes?
Oh! can you check the unrelenting sea,
Or make the jarring elements agree?
Can you forbid the tide to ebb or flow,
Can you restrain the fall of hail or snow,
Can you command the thunder not to roar,
Or drive the beating billows from the shore;
Have you the art to lull a storm to sleep?
Such pow'rs alone, can teach me not to weep;
And since such pow'rs ev'n angels are deny'd,
Forbear, a fellow-mortal's grief to chide.
But, give me licence to lament her fall,
As David mourn'd for Jonathan and Saul:
Or, if it may with innocence be done,
As he lamented Absalom his son,
When in the anguish of his soul he cry'd,
Would God, my son! I in thy stead had dy'd!
And lend your aid (if any such there be)
Who love a child, or mourn for one like me.
Your sympathetic sighs in concert join,
And blend your tears, your groans, your pray'rs with mine.

But, if there's none commiserates my case,
And in no breast compassion finds a place,
Let not your censures add to my concern,
Nor smile, whilst I, immerst in sorrows, mourn.
If you are void of trouble, free from pain,
Increase not mine, nor wonder I complain.
I know the stroke is from the hand divine,
To whom I must submit, and not repine.
Tho' I deplore my loss and wish it less,
Yet I will kiss the rod and acquiesce.
A Saviour's blood shall spew off my fears,
And, love paternal, justify my tears.
When death at first besieg'd this little fort,
The feeble out-works were the tyrant's sport;
A fever made the first attack in form,
And then, convulsions took it soon by storm;
Succours from art were weak, like those within,
The guards were sickly, and the walls were thin;
In bad repair the gates and citadel,
No wonder then, that with such ease it fell.
Death's icy hands the lovely fabric spoil'd,
He got a victim, but I lost my child.
Five mournful days, with trembling hand and heart,
I play'd the whole artillery of art.
Five nights I pass'd in sorrow like the day,
And almost mourn'd my own sad self away;
But, when the whole that art could do, was try'd,
Her lease of life was cancel'd, and she dy'd.
She dy'd! The conscious whisp'ring winds reply,
And I, unhappy father! saw her die.
I saw her die: Can I the deed forgive?
How can I bear to say I did and live.
Tho' long her reason suffer'd an eclipse,
No sinful words proceeded from her lips,
And tho' oppress'd with agonizing pain,
She utter'd nothing indiscreet or vain;
Hence my fond hope, her soul being free from sin,
Resign'd, and spotless, was at peace within.
Whilst nature yet maintain'd the doubtful strife,
And death sat brooding on the verge of life;
Ev'n then, when all the hopes of life were fled,
I and the angels waiting round her bed,
They to conduct her to the realms of day,
And I to weep, to sigh, to mourn, to pray.
I kiss'd her lips; I wip'd her dying face,
And took the father's, and the nurse's place.
Her dying groans were daggers to my heart;
We knew we must, but Oh! we're loth to part.
I mourn'd, I wept, I gave aloof to grief,
And had recourse to all things for relief;
But, all in vain! The last effort I make!
I gave—But Oh! she had not strength to take.
Her flatt'ring pulse with intermission play'd,
And then her heart, its palpitation stay'd;
And thus thro' all the forms of death she pass'd,
Till, with a groan, my dear one breath'd her last.
But who can paint the horror or the pow'r,
Of nature's conflict, in so dark an hour?
The wound was such, that time can never heal,
No balm can cure it, and no art conceal.
May that sad day be banish'd from the year,
Or clo'd in fable, if it must appear!
May the bright sun withdraw his beams at noon,
And solid darkness veil the stars and moon!
May all the fands be stagnant in the glass,
And, as the hour returns refuse to pass!

All clocks be dumb, and time forget to fly,
And may all nature be as sad as I!
Let mourning in its blackest dress appear,
And she be never named without a tear!
Her name shall live, and yield a sweet perfume,
And, tho' in dust, her memory shall bloom.
Ah! where are now those dear obedient hands
So pleas'd to execute my whole commands?
Where are those feet so early taught to run,
As light'ning swift, unwearied as the sun?
Or, where those arms, which with such passion strove,
To clasp my neck, and stifle me with love?
Where those dear lips where mine were fond to dwell,
And where that breath which ravish'd with its smell?
Where is that tongue whose prattle pleas'd mine ears,
Where fled the hope of my declining years?
Where is that face so pleasant when she smil'd
Or, where's the woman acting in the child?
Where those dear eyes, which with such sweetness shone,
Or rather, where are all my comforts gone?
Where is that breast where virtue once did grow
As roses sweet, and white as falling snow?
They're buried all in the voracious grave,
Where kings are level'd with the meanest slave.
The wife and great when there they make their bed,
Are equal'd by the wretch who beg'd his bread.
'Tis there the wicked can no more oppress,
And there the weary find a calm recess.
Alas! the wretched hope, in this alone;
In this confiding, I will cease to moan.
Till death, this thought shall mitigate my woe,
And dry those tears which now profusely flow.
That when, by heaven's command, I quit the stage,
Bow'd down by time, and quite fatigued by age:
My flesh shall rest in quiet by her side,
Like a fond bridegroom sleeping by his bride,
Till the last day shall both to life restore,
When death shall die, and time shall be no more;
Oh! then, blest shade! my late delight and pride,
In whom I hop'd to have a nurse and guide;
When tasteless days shall bow my hoary head,
And pain or sickness fix me to my bed;
If I may guiltless call upon thy name,
And ask a boon without incurring blame.
Tho' thou art happy now among the blest,
Indulge a tender father's last request;
When some kind angel from this world below
Shall bring the news, for sure the angels know,
And shall to thee and other spirits tell
That mine has orders to forsake its shell,
And be transplanted to the realms of light
Where hope and fear are swallow'd up in sight,
Do thou with heavenly rapture meet my ghost
On th' utmost limits of that happy coast.
Let me receive increase of joy from you,
Till then, my little saint! Adieu! Adieu!

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